COTA VICTORIA

Seniors Rights VICTORIA

Promoting opportunities. Protecting rights. For older Victorians.

Your vote counts

An older person's guide for the 2026 Victorian state election



Council for the Ageing (COTA) Victoria and Seniors Rights Victoria have produced this guide to alert older Victorians to new arrangements to support voting accessibility in the upcoming Victorian state election on 28 November 2026.

This resource is about when, where, and how to cast your vote. This resource is about when, where, and how to cast your vote. We also encourage you to visit our state election portal, which will be updated with further guides such as this to assist you with your vote.

Make your vote count

The state election is a key opportunity to express your view on the direction Victoria should take over the coming four years.

As the peak body for the interests of Victorians over 50, COTA Victoria encourages you to cast your vote and choose your preferred candidates, considering their support for an ageing Victoria. Every vote counts, and your vote will help ensure that the voices of older Victorians are heard and their needs and interests recognized in the next Victorian Parliament.

Requirement to vote

Voting is the right of every citizen of Victoria aged 18 and over. It is also a legal responsibility for most people. There is no upper age limit. If you fail to vote without a valid excuse, you may be fined $99. Valid reasons that may mean you avoid a fine include serious physical or mental illness, intellectual disability, homelessness, or family violence (which includes elder abuse situations).

An older person may be removed from the electoral roll if their family or guardian says they are incapable of understanding the process. This should never occur because of an assumption about a person's capacity, or a view that voting is too onerous a responsibility for them. Not respecting an older person's right to vote may be classed as restrictive or abusive behaviour.

Enrolment

If you are not already on the electoral roll, **you have until 3 November to register.** You can check your enrolment and, if necessary, enrol online or via a printed form obtained by calling the Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) on 131 832.

COTA Victoria and Seniors Rights Victoria
Level 1, 420 St Kilda Road
Melbourne VIC 3004

COTA WISE Helpline: 1300 135 090
Seniors Rights Victoria Helpline: 1300 368 821
Websites: cotavic.org.au | seniorsrights.org.au

Finally, those that receive a Centrelink payment If you are aged 70 or over you can enrol as a general postal voter. This is also available to people who are seriously ill or live more than 20km from a voting centre. If you are enrolled in this way, you will automatically receive a voting pack in the mail for all state elections. Visit the VEC website for more information.

Ways to vote

Most Victorians choose to vote in person at a voting centre on election day. Our own advocacy has had a direct impact on recent changes to improve the accessibility of this process. All centres will be wheelchair accessible, provide visual aids like magnifying sheets, and have information in different formats and languages.

Other options include:

- **Postal voting:** Anyone can apply to vote by post in a specific election. Applications open on 4 November and close on 25 November (general postal voters need not apply again). Ballot packs start being mailed out once all candidates are confirmed. The VEC will also supply application forms directly to many aged care facilities to assist residents to apply for a postal vote.
- **Braille and large print ballot papers** can also be provided. You need to register by 5 November to receive a pack by mail.
- **Early voting:** Anyone can attend an early voting centre available in every district from 18 November to 27 November. These centres will have the same accessibility features as election day centres.
- **Low sensory voting:** There will be an opportunity for voters with sensory needs and neurodivergence to vote in a quiet environment at a voting centre in each district on 17 November.
- **Mobile voting:** On-site voting services run by VEC staff will be available in many residential aged care homes and certain community centres. This will run over the early voting period from 18-27 November. Ask your facility if they'll be hosting a mobile voting service.
- **Phone voting:** You can register to vote by phone if you are blind, low vision, or have a motor impairment that means you need help voting. Registration opens on 18 November, and you can vote this way on each day of early voting or on election day.

Detailed instructions on how to fill out ballot papers for both the lower house (Legislative Assembly) and upper house (Legislative Council) will be made available in various formats and languages for all voting options.

Changes for the this election

As a result of extensive consultation and review, including input from COTA Victoria and Seniors Rights Victoria, some important changes have been made for the 2026 state election. Key changes likely to benefit older people are:

- All early voting centres will now also be election day centres, making it easier to find a convenient venue and ensuring consistent accessibility features. The total number of centres has been increased from 155 in 2022 to over 200.

  Note that the early voting period is now shorter, with this option available for 10 days on 18-27 November.

- Low sensory voting will be expanded from a few trial sites in 2022, to provide a session in a voting centre in every district. This will be available on Tuesday 17 November from 10am to 4pm.
- The VEC will provide targeted support to around 900 aged care and community facilities in the form of either mobile voting or support for postal voting.
- There will be more signage in voting centres to alert voters who find it difficult to stand or have mobility issues to how they can be brought up to the front of the queue. Queue controllers will also be more actively checking the queue.
- An EasyVote guide in printed form will be mailed to every household with key information on when, where and how to vote correctly.

Further information

Updates and further detail can be obtained via the Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) website or by phone on 131 832. You can also sign up to receive information from VEC's VoterAlert direct to your phone or inbox.

If you have further queries about arrangements for voting or related issues you can also always call the COTA WISE Helpline on 1300 135 090, email us, or browse through our online information portal.

Key dates

- **Deadline for enrolment to vote:** 8pm, Tuesday 3 November.
- **Nominations for postal vote applications open:** Wednesday 4 November.
- **Low sensory voting sessions in each district:** 10am to 4 pm, Tuesday 17 November.
- **Registration for phone voting opens:** Wednesday 18 November.
- **First day of early voting and mobile voting:** 9am to 6pm, Wednesday 18 November.
- **Nominations for postal vote applications close:** 6pm Wednesday 25 November.
- **Final day of early voting and mobile voting:** 9am to 6pm, Friday 27 November.
- **Election Day voting centres open:** 8am to 6pm, Saturday 28 November.